



Stuffed, Not Ready-to-Eat Poultry Products

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Illnesses from Stuffed Chicken:

Foodborne Illness Outbreaks: FY 2010 – Present

- **FY 2010 – FY 2019:**

- FSIS investigated 51 outbreaks associated with not ready-to-eat (NRTE) poultry
 - 8/51 have been associated with NRTE stuffed poultry products
 - Frozen, raw, stuffed chicken products, which are often breaded and par-fried
 - Products are NRTE, but appear RTE to consumers
 - Labeled raw and include cooking instructions

- **June 2021 – Present:**

- Open multistate *Salmonella* Enteritidis illness outbreak
 - 28 cases from 8 states
 - 62% report eating stuffed chicken
- Recall of 59,251 pounds; August 9, 2021



Current Poultry Policy:

Labeling

- Manufacturers have taken steps to improve their labeling to ensure that the consumer is aware that the product is raw.
- Industry has taken steps to validate the cooking instructions.
- Industry has further specified that these products should not be microwaved.

2016 NCC Petition

In May 2016, the National Chicken Council petitioned FSIS

- To establish labeling requirements for NRTE stuffed chicken products that may appear RTE; and
- Issue a guidance document for developing and communicating validated cooking instructions.



Consumer Research:

FSIS Consumer Research Findings: Meal Preparation Experiment on Raw Stuffed Chicken Breasts



- Consumers often do not pay attention to the safe handling instructions
 - They are more likely to look at the manufacturer's cooking instructions
- Nearly 50% of the consumers in the study said they do not typically use a thermometer
- About 70% of participants did not have experience preparing stuffed chicken products from frozen
- About 83% of participants expressed confidence in their ability to safely prepare food when cooking at home

FSIS Consumer Research Findings: Meal Preparation Experiment on Raw Stuffed Chicken Breasts



- Nearly all (99%) of participants reported reading the instructions on the package
- 84% believed the product was raw or partially cooked
- 88% of the treatment group used the food thermometer
- Handwashing recommendations were not followed:
 - Only 5% of participants followed all the steps of correct handwashing
 - During meal preparation, handwashing was only attempted 5% of the time, and there were no successful handwashing attempts.

Questions for NACMPI:

NACMPI Committee Question 1

1. Given FSIS' consumer research findings and an open multistate *Salmonella* Enteritidis illness outbreak, should FSIS re-verify that companies continue to voluntarily label these products as raw in several places on the label and include validated cooking instructions?

NACMPI Committee Question 2, a – c

2. What, if any, actions can FSIS take to prevent and reduce illnesses associated with the handling or consumption of these NRTE products? For example, should FSIS:

- a. Conduct exploratory sampling for pathogens and/or indicator organisms in these and other similar raw, stuffed or non-stuffed partially processed products?
- b. Require establishments to apply a lethality treatment to ensure that all products are RTE?
- c. Sample these products for *Salmonella* because consumers customarily undercook them?

NACMPI Committee Question 2, d – e

2. What, if any, actions can FSIS take to prevent and reduce illnesses associated with the handling or consumption of these NRTE products? For example, should FSIS:

- d. Require establishments that produce these products to reassess their HACCP plans, in light of outbreak data?
- e. Conduct targeted consumer outreach? If so, please provide some ideas on the best approaches.



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